



## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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### **Hawai'i Department of Health cites Hū Honua Bioenergy for an illegal wastewater discharge**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Clean Water Branch has issued a Notice of Violation and Order (NOVO) to Hū Honua Bioenergy, LLC for an unauthorized discharge of industrial wastewater on Nov. 9, 2018, at their facility in Pepe'ekeo on Hawai'i Island. The NOVO states that Hū Honua Bioenergy, LLC, violated Hawai'i Revised Statutes, HRS 342D-50(a) for discharging pollutants to a state water without a permit or other authorization.

“Our inspectors have confirmed a worker for Hū Honua Bioenergy opened a valve on its industrial wastewater treatment tank and allowed the contents of the tank to discharge from their facility into the environment,” said Keith Kawaoka, deputy director of the Environmental Health Administration for DOH. “This is a serious violation as discharges without permit authorization are strictly prohibited to protect human and environmental health from exposure to pollutants, which can cause serious and sometimes irreparable harm.”

The DOH investigation determined the discharged wastewater was generated between Nov. 2-6, 2018, as part of Hū Honua Bioenergy's commissioning of its boiler and had been stored in wastewater treatment tanks prior to the discharge. Between 3,500 and 32,500 gallons of treated industrial wastewater composed of freshwater, acidic metal cleaning solution and residue from the descaling of the boiler was discharged. While the dark green colored wastewater had been filtered and neutralized prior to discharge, it contained high levels of iron and is a regulated waste.

The NOVO requires Hū Honua Bioenergy to implement environmental compliance training for all its employees within 30 days, develop standard operating procedures to prevent discharges of a similar nature, and pay a penalty of \$25,000 to DOH. After all corrective actions have been completed, Hū Honua Bioenergy must submit a corrective action report to DOH.

In addition to the NOVO, the department has issued a formal Request for Information (RFI) to Hū Honua Bioenergy, LLC and the company is required to provide timely responses to questions from the DOH. Hū Honua Bioenergy may request a hearing to contest the NOVO and RFI within 20 days of receipt of the order.

The Hawai'i Department of Health protects and restores inland and coastal waters for the enjoyment of residents and visitors, and for marine and wildlife. This is accomplished through statewide coastal water surveillance and watershed-based environmental management using a combination of permit issuance, water quality monitoring and investigation, water quality violation enforcement, polluted runoff control, and public education.

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